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Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EB/ OA/ AVP: JSGRAVATT: JO
3/23/73 EXT. 20702
APPROVED BY EB/ OA/ AVP: DBORTMAN
EUR/ CE - MR. RUECK
RT
---------- 011657
R 232322 Z MAR 73
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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E. O. 11652: N/ A
TAGS: ETRN, AU
SUBJECT: AIRPORT CHARGES AT VIENNA

1. PAN AM HAS COMPLAINED TO DEPT ABOUT INCREASES IN AIRPORT CHARGES AT VIENNA, WHICH AFTER AN AUDIT OF THE FLUGHAFEN WIEN BETRIEBSGELLSCHAFT (FWB) IN MARCH 1972 WERE REVISED DOWNWARDS BUT STILL CONSTITUTE A 15 PERCENT NET INCREASE IN CHARGES. PAA STATES THAT WHEN IT ACCEPTED 1968 INCREASES IN CHARGES, FEDERAL MINISTRY AGREED THAT IN PREPARATION FOR FUTURE INCREASES FWB WOULD PREPARE JUSTIFICATIONS AND BREAK-DOWN OF FINANCIAL STATISTICS. HOWEVER, IN MID-1971 WHEN FWB AGAIN ANNOUNCED PLANS TO INCREASE CHARGES, IT REFUSED TO HONOR 1968 AGREEMENT. PAA DOES NOT CONSIDER ITS REQUEST FOR JUSTIFICATION BY FISCAL DATA UNREASONABLE, PARTICULARLY SINCE THE FWB BY LAW MUST BE A NON- PROFIT ORGANIZATION. THE AMOUNT OF THE LANDING FEES NOW BEING ASSESSED, DESPITE CARRIER PROTEST, IS CONSIDERED EXCESSIVE BASED ON CARRIER RESEARCH OF INFORMATION PRIVATELY OBTAINED.

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2. PAA REPORTS THAT RAMP SERVICES CHARGES, WHICH ARE ALSO BEING INCREASED, ARE BASED ON GROSS TAKE- OFF WEIGHT BEARING NO RELATION TO SERVICES ACTUALLY RENDERED. MOREOVER, PAA CONSIDERS THAT RAMP HANDLING IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF ITS OPERATION, WHICH SHOULD BE UNDER ITS CONTROL. RECOMMENDATION B-16 OF THE ICAO FACILITATION DIVISION SESSION OF 1963 RECOMMENDED THAT THE AIRLINES BE OFFERED THE CHOICE OF PROVIDING THEIR OWN SERVICES FOR GROUND HANDLING OPERATIONS, OR OF HAVING SUCH OPERATIONS PERFORMED BY AN ORGANIZATION CONTROLLED BY ANOTHER AIRLINE OR BY THE AIRPORT OPERATOR OR LICENSED SERVICING AGENT.

3. PAA' S THIRD COMPLAINT IS THAT THE VARIABLE ELEMENT IN THE LANDING CHARGE, IN LIEU OF THE FORMER PASSEN- GER SERVICE CHARGE COLLECTED FROM THE PASSENGER, HAS BEEN INCREASED SO SOON AFTER ITS INTRODUCTION APRIL 1, 1971 AND DESPITE PRIOR ASSURANCES FROM ECAC MEMBER STATES THAT THERE WOULD BE NO INCREASE IN AIRPORT REVENUES FROM THIS SOURCE OTHER THAN THAT GENERATED BY INCREASES IN NUMBER OF PASSENGERS INVOLVED.

4. EMBASSY REQUESTED INVESTIGATE SITUATION REPORTED BY PAA AND SUBMIT REPORT TO DEPT. DEPT NOTES AUSTRIA HAS RECENTLY APPROVED A MAJOR EXPANSION OF VIENNA/ SCHWECHAT AIRPORT WHICH MAY BE ONE REASON FOR INCREASED CHARGES. ROGERS

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